



Friday Fellowship News No 34, 11 December 2020

LIGHT SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

"THE light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it." John 1:5

What new significance this verse takes on this year - for what a dark year it has been in so many ways and yet, as Christians, we are in the middle of Advent, counting down the days till we celebrate the coming of Jesus – the Light of the World! Jesus, who not only came to illuminate our steps in this life and into the next, but also, to expose the dark places, the evil and corrupt places of the world.



This year the lighting off St Denys Church has been especially appreciated by villagers, and I've had so many messages thanking us for illuminating the church which, as many have said, has stood as a "symbol of hope". My thanks go especially to Peter and Roger, without whose practical help this, and so many other things each year, would not happen.

I know they won't mind me saying that if there are any folk in the village who wouldn't mind, on just a few occasions in the year, helping out for an hour or two with some practical work in the churchyard, erecting lighting, or the Easter Cross or the Christmas Tree, then to have a list of people we can 'call upon' would be such a huge help!

If you wouldn't mind being on our 'call on' list for 2021, please email me at vicar@stdenys.org Thank You. The Vicar.



Whilst the church is being lit, people are also lighting Christmas Stars in their Windows – and Maz Galey has kindly created a Nativity Scene which is illuminated in the North Porch for people to look at as they pass by the church at night – 'thank you' Maz!

Why not decorate and illuminate a Star, or a Nativity Scene for your front room – or wherever can best be seen by those passing by?

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE - 1015am

BOOKING IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL if you are coming for **Christmas Day Service at 1015am.**

Due to social distancing, we need to restrict numbers to around 50 people – depending on how logistically we can fit some families together, and how many single seats, 2m apart we need.

Please remember that there is NO 10pm Christmas Eve service this year, nor is there a 9am BCP on Christmas Day. So 1015am is THE Christmas Day service for 2020 due to Covid.

So, it is VITAL that you let Janet Warren know ASAP if you are planning to come on Christmas Day, either via 710789 or jmwarren302@gmail.com. Do Not assume she will know you are coming – whoever you are - just ‘turning up’ on the day is almost certainly going to lead, sadly, to disappointment, Many thanks, Nigel Archer, Churchwarden.

SUNDAY SERMON AND QUESTIONS

THE Bible Readings for this coming Sunday, Advent 3 are Psalm 126, 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 and John 1: 6-8, 19-28,

Revd Nigel Knights Johnson is preaching on the John passage, and after his sermon has been preached on Sunday, I shall email out the text of his sermon, together with questions which you may like to use for personal or, Home Group study?

DAN SMITH

I HAVE been asked by Glen and Jane Smith to pass on the sad news that Dan Smith died on December 9. However, his passing was peaceful, in his sleep at St Katherine’s Nursing Home, Wantage, where he has been staying for some months now. Dan is now at peace and is re-united with his beloved Jill.

As you will expect, on top of their grief, Glen and Jane have an awful lot of arranging to do now in relation to the funeral, and in relation to the house in Bow Road. They have therefore asked me if I can act on their behalf, as a conduit for all information about the funeral. This I shall do, and I shall pass on any news as soon as received via email.

Secondly, they have requested that in this current season, any contact with them be either via email (smiths390@btinternet.com) or, via the good old post: 39, Kennett Road, Grove, Oxfordshire, OX12 0NU.

I am sure that we shall all want to be upholding Glen and Jane, Tom and Harry, Tim and Phil in our prayers and love.

ADVENT 2020 REFLECTIONS

HOW are you finding being able to set aside 10 minutes or so, each day, throughout Advent to read one, or even all three Morning Prayer Bible Readings sent for the day? Experts say it takes 12 days to establish a new routine, but once established, it is so much easier to do, and instead of a formula or a chore, it starts becoming something you look forward to, and becomes a real anchor point in your day.

I’ve been sending out a brief Reflection on the main Morning Prayer Bible reading each day as, I hope, a help and/or an encouragement for us all to read the same passage of scripture, and to see what God might say to us corporately, as His church.

I’ve had a few people email me to say that they are finding reading Morning Prayer each day is a very tangible means of them of feeling part of the wider church, and uniting them with the rest of the church.

I’d love to hear any reflections that you’ve had on the readings and, whether you’d find continuing such Reflections useful throughout the year, or just at Lent and Advent?

PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

A little reminder that OPEN DOORS has an emailable Newsletter, keeping us up to date with the needs of Persecuted Christians around the globe. For details, please visit

<https://www.opendoorsuk.org/resources/finding-family/>

HEALTH UPDATE

ORTHOPAEDIC and Anaesthesia Consultation done ahead of my full Hip Replacement – both went well, and I’m now just awaiting a call from the Bookings Team at the Great Western Hospital in Swindon – so please pray that a date comes through soon – the national news re waiting times is not good – but we believe in a BIG God!

As some of you have heard, last week I underwent laser surgery on a tear in my left eye. The surgery went well, and the consultant was amazing - given that I could not sit for laser surgery, so she had to stand up and laser over me whilst I lay on my side!

So I’m slowly working my way through hospital departments – gradually finding my way to the one marked ‘orthopaedic surgery’ door! Thanks for your ongoing prayers.

Revd Paul Eddy, Vicar

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